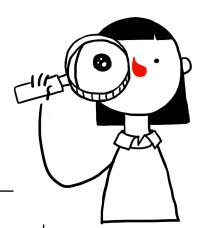


'Miracles?' activity

What does the word 'miracle' mean?

Look at the events below.

- 1) Do you think they are miracles?
- 2) How do you think a humanist (or someone who does not believe in miracles) might explain such an event?



Events

- a) Most people die in a plane crash, but a few survive.
- b) A statue of the Virgin Mary weeps.
- c) A parachute fails but the parachutist lands in a tree and survives.
- d) Someone walks barefoot over hot coals.
- e) Someone says a prayer for somebody who is ill and they get better.
- f) Someone appears to turn water into wine.
- g) Someone claims somebody was raised from the dead.

Follow-up questions:

- 3) Why are unlikely happy events sometimes called miracles but not unlikely unhappy events?
- 4) Why would a god intervene in the laws of nature to make a statue weep but not to save hundreds of people from an earthquake?
- 5) What would provide good evidence for a miracle that broke the laws of nature? Can it ever be more likely that such a miracle took place than that we were mistaken about what happened?

See 'Miracles: a humanist perspective' for possible humanist explanations of the events